

28 Jan 1697 8<sup>th</sup> Feb 1697  
4<sup>th</sup> CONTEMPLATIONS  
83  
UPON

# Life and Death:

WITH

Serious Reflections on the Miseries

THAT ATTEND

HUMANE LIFE,

In every Station, Degree, and Change thereof.

*Written by a Person of Quality, in his Con-  
finement, a Week before his Death.*

SHEWING

The Vanity of the Desires of Long LIFE,  
and the Fears of DEATH.

WITH

A True Copy of the PAPER

Delivered to the Sheriffs upon the Scaffold at  
Tower-Hill, on Thursday, January 28. 1697

By Sir JOHN FENWICK, Baronet.

L O N D O N:

Printed for G. Larkin, and Sold by most Booksellers in  
London and Westminster. 1697. 9. Febr.

THE NEW YORK  
UNION  
Life and Death.

Series of Reflections on the Millennium

BY THE AUTHOR

WILLIAM L. GAY

In every age, there is a certain number of persons who are distinguished by a peculiar character, and who are called the "Millennium."

These persons are the "Millennium," and they are the only ones who are called the "Millennium."

These persons are the "Millennium," and they are the only ones who are called the "Millennium."

THE NEW YORK

UNION

BY THE AUTHOR

A True Copy of the

Original Manuscript of the

Author, as preserved in the

By ST. JOHN F. F. F.

Printed by

and is the property of

# Contemplations upon *Life* and *Death*;

WITH

*Serious Reflections on the Miseries that  
attend Humane Life, &c.*



*Osce te ipsum*, is a Lesson a Man can never learn too late: And therefore tho' hitherto I have liv'd so much a Stranger to my self, that I have had little leisure, and less desire, to think or to Contemplate, (a studious and sedentary Life having always been my Aversion) yet the Solitary Condition I am now reduc'd to, and the Melancholy Circumstances under which I lie, do methinks call upon me to consider what I have been doing, and what I am further shortly to do: I am now under a close Confinement, secluded from all Conversation with the World, and deny'd the Visits of my Nearest and Dearest Relations. And all this seems to be but the sad Prologue to that sadder Tragedy in which I am to be the principal Actor, before I go off the Stage of this World. And therefore since Death and I must shortly be better acquainted, it will certainly be my Wisdom, as well as my Interest, to familiarize it to me before hand: And I do not know how

how that can be better done, than by contemplating the Miseries of Life, in all its various Changes and Conditions; and then to look upon Death as the great *Painpharmakon*, and Remedy of all those Evils that Life subjects us to.

'Tis true indeed, we generally fly from Death as our worst Enemy, altho' it is in truth our greatest Friend; and this, to a considering Man, is very unaccountable. I must confess it does seem strange to me, and is methinks a thing to be admir'd, that the poor Labourer to repose himself longs for the setting Sun; that the Mariner rows with all his might to attain his wish'd-for Port, and rejoices when he can discover Land; that the Traveller is never contented till he be at the end of his Journey: And that we, in the mean while, tied in this World to a perpetual Task, toss'd with continual Tempests, and tired with a rough and thorny way, yet cannot see the end of our Labour, but with grief; nor behold our Port, but with tears; nor approach to our Home, but with horror and trembling. This Life is but a *Penelope's* Web, in which we are always doing and undoing; a Sea that lies open to all Winds, which sometimes within, and sometimes without, never ceases to blow violently upon us; a weary Journey through extream heats and colds, over high Mountains, steep Rocks, and dangerous Desarts: And thus we pass away our time in weaving at this Web; in rowing at this Oar, and in passing this miserable Way: And yet when Death comes to end our Work, and stretches out his Arms to pull us into the Port; when after so many dangerous Passages, and loathsome Lodgings, he would conduct us to our true Home and Resting Place; instead of rejoicing at the end of our Labour, of taking comfort at the sight of our desired Haven; and of singing at our approach to those happy Mansions; we would fain begin our Work again, hoise Sail to the Wind, and would willingly undertake our Journey anew: No more we then remember our weariness and pains; our dangers and our shipwracks are forgotten: We fear no more the tiresomeness of Travel, nor the danger of Desarts. But on the contrary, we apprehend Death as an extream pain; we shun it as the fatal Rock on which we are like to split; we fly it as a Thief that comes to rob us of our Treasure: We do as little Children, who all the day complain of Illness, and when the Medicine is brought them, are



no longer sick : Or as they who all the week long run up and down the streets, complaining of the pain of their Teeth, and yet seeing the Barber coming to pull them out, are rather willing still to endure the pain, than use the Remedy : And as those tender and delicate Bodies, who in a pricking Pleurisie complain, and cry out, and cannot stay for a Surgeon ; and yet when they see him whetting his Launcet, to cut the throat of the Disease, pull in their Arms and hide them in the Bed, as if he were come to kill them. We fear more the Cure, than the Disease ; the Surgeon, than the Pain ; the Stroke, than the Imposthume : We have more sence of the Medicines bitterness, soon gone, than of a bitter long-continued Languishing : We have more feeling of Death, the End of our Miseries, than the Endless Misery of our Life. And whence proceedeth this Folly and Simplicity ? We neither know Life nor Death : We fear what we ought to hope for, and wish for what we ought to fear : We call Life a continual Death, and yet Death is the Entrance of a Never-dying Life.

Now what Good, O my Soul, is there in Life, that thou shouldst so much desire it ? Or what evil is there in Death, that thou shouldst so much fear it ? Nay what Evil is there not in Life, and what Good is there not in Death ?

Consider all the Periods of this Life : We enter it in tears, we pass it in sweat, we end it in sorrow. Great and Little, Rich and Poor, not one in the whole World that can plead Immunity from this Condition. Man in this point is worse than all other Creatures : He is born unable to support himself ; neither receiving in his first years any pleasure, nor giving to others any thing but trouble ; and before the Age of Discretion passing infinite dangers. Onely herein he is less unhappy than in other Ages, because in this he hath no sence nor apprehension of his Misery. Now can we think there is any so void of Reason, that if it were granted him to live always a Child, would make Choice of such a Life ?

So then it is evident, That not simply to *Live*, is desirable ; but to *Live Well and Happily*. But to proceed.

Grows he ? His Troubles likewise grow up with him. Scarcely is he come out of his Nurses hands, and scarce knows what it is to play, but he falls under the subjection of a Schoolmaster : I speak

ſpeak but of thoſe which have the beſt Education, and are brought up with the greateſt care and ſtrictneſs. And then if he ſtudies, it is ever with Repining: And if he plays, it is never but with Fear.

This whole Age, while he is under the charge of another, is unto him no better than a Priſon: And therefore he longs for, and only aſpires to that Age, in which, freed from the Tutelage of another, he may become Maſter of himſelf; pushing Time forward, as it were, with his ſhoulder, that he may the ſooner enjoy his hoped-for Liberty. In ſhort, he deſires nothing more than to ſee the end of this Age, which he looks upon as Bondage and Slavery, and enter upon the beginning of his Youth.

And what is the beginning of Youth, but the death of Infancy? And the beginning of Manhood, but the death of Youth? Or what is the beginning of to Morrow, but the death of the preſent Day?

And thus he implicitly deſires his Death, and judges his Life miſerable; and therefore cannot be reputed in a ſtate of Happineſs or Contentment.

Behold him now, according to his wiſh, at Liberty; in that Age wherein he has his Choice, to take the way of Vertue or of Vice, and either to chooſe Reaſon or Paſſion for his Guide: His Paſſion entertains him with a thouſand Delights, prepares for him a thouſand Baits, and preſents him with a thouſand Worldly Pleaſures to ſurprize him; And theſe are ſo agreeable to headſtrong and unbridled Youth, that there are very few that are not taken and beguiled by them; of which my own Example is too evident an Inſtance.

But when the Reckoning comes to be made up; what Pleaſures are they? They are but vicious and polluted Pleaſures, which ever hold him in a reſtleſs Fever: Pleaſures that at the beſt end in Repentance, and like ſweet Meats, are of a hard digeſtion: Pleaſures that are bought with pain, and in a moment periſh, but leave behind a laſting Guilt, and long remorse of Conſcience: All which I wiſh my own too dear Experience could not witneſs.

And yet this is the very Nature (if they be well examin'd) of all the Pleaſures of this World: There is in none ſo much Sweetneſs, but there is more Bitterneſs; none ſo pleaſant to the Mouth, but it leaves

leaves an unfavoury Gusto after it. I will not speak here of the Mischiefs, Quarrels, Debates, Wounds, Murthers, Banishments, Sicknefs and other Dangers, whereinto sometimes the Incontinency, and sometimes the Insolency of this ill-guided Age does plunge Men; for the remembrance of my own Follies upon this occasion, stops my mouth, and fills me with remorse and shame.

But if those that seem Pleasures be nothing else but Displeasures, if the Sweetnefs thereof be as an Infusion of Wormwood; what then must the Displeasure be which they feel? And how great the Bitternefs that they taste?

Behold then in short the Life of a young Man, who rid of the Government of his Parents and Masters, abandons himself to all the Exorbitancies of his unruly Passion, which like an unclean Spirit possessing him, throws him sometimes into the Water, and then into the Fire; sometimes carries him clear over a Rock, and at other times flings him headlong to the bottom.

But if he follows *Reason* for his Guide (which is much the better choice) yet on this hand there are wonderful Difficulties: For he must resolve to fight in every part of the Field, and at every step to be in conflict, as having his Enemy in front, in flank, and on the rear, never leaving to assail him; and this Enemy is all that can delight him, all that he sees near, or far off; In short, the greatest Enemy in the World is the World it self, which he must therefore overcome: But beside the World, he has a thousand Treacherous Enemies within him, among whom his Passion is none of the least, which waits for an occasion to surprize him, and betray him to his Lusts. It is God only that can make him choose the Path of Vertue, and it is God only that can keep him in it to the End, and make him victorious in all his combats. But alas, how few they are that enter into it! And of those few, how many that retire again! So that let a Man follow the one way or the other, he must either subject himself to a Tyrannical Passion, or undertake a weary and continual Combat; wilfully throw himself into the Arms of Destruction, or fetter himself as it were in the Stocks; easily carried away with the current of the Water, or painfully stemming the impetuous Tide.

See here the happinefs of the young Man! Who in his Youth having drunk his full draught of the Worlds vain and deceivable

Pleasures, is over-taken by them with such a dull heaviness and astonishment, as Drunkards the morrow after a Debauch; or Gluttons, after a plentiful Feast; who are so over-press'd with the Excesses of the former day, that the very remembrance of it creates their loathing. And even he that has made the stoutest resistance, feels himself so weary, and with this continual Conflict so bruised and broken, that he is either upon the point to yield, or dye. And this is all the Good, all the Contentment of this flourishing Age, by Children so earnestly desired, and by those who have experienc'd it, so heartily lamented.

Next cometh that which is called Perfect Age, in which Men have no other thoughts, but to purchase themselves Wisdom and Rest. It is called perfect indeed, but is herein only perfect, that all Imperfections of Humane Nature, hidden before under the simplicity of Childhood, or the lightness of Youth, appear at this Age in their Perfection. I speak of none in this place, but those that are esteem'd the wisest and most happy, in the opinion of the World.

I have already shewed that we play'd in fear; and that our short Pleasures were attended on with long Repentance: But now Avarice and Ambition present themselves to us, promising if we will adore them, to give us perfect Contentment with the Goods and Honours of this World; And surely none but those who are restrained by a Divine Hand, can escape the Illusions of the one or the other, and not cast themselves headlong from the top of the Pinacle.

But let us see what this Contentment is: The Covetous Man Makes a thousand Voyages by Sea, and Journeys by Land; runs a thousand hazzards, escapes a thousand shipwracks, and is in perpetual fear and travel; and yet oftentimes either loseth his time, or gains nothing but Sickneses, Gouts and Oppilations. In the purchase of this goodly Repose, he bestoweth his true Rest; and to gain Wealth, loseth his Life. But suppose he hath gain'd much, and that he hath spoil'd the whole East of its Pearls, and drawn dry all the Mines of the West; will he then be at quier, and say he is content? Nothing less: For by all his Acquisitions, he gains but more Disquiet both of Mind and Body; from one travel falling into another, never ending, but only changing his Miseries:

He

He desir'd to have them, and now fears to lose them; he got 'em with burning ardour, and possesses 'em in trembling cold; he adventur'd among Thieves to get them, and now fears by Thieves and Robbers to be depriv'd of 'em again; he labour'd to dig them out of the Earth; and now to secure them, he hides them therein. In short, coming from all his Voyages, he comes into a Prison: and the end of his bodily travels, is but the beginning of the endless labour of his Mind. Judge now what this Man has gain'd, after so many Miseries. This Devil of Covetousness persuades him he has some rare and excellent thing; and so it fares with him as with those poor Creatures whom the Devil seduceth under colour of relieving their Poverty; who find their hands full of Leaves, when they thought to find them full of Crowns: He possesseth, or rather is possessed by, a thing wherein is neither Power nor Virtue, more base and unprofitable than the least Herb of the Earth. Yet hath he heaped together this vile Excrement, and so brutish is grown, as therewith to crown his head, when he ought to tread it under his feet.

But however it be, is he therewith satisfied and contented? So far from that, that he is now more dissatisfied than ever. We commend most those Drinks that breed an alteration, and soonest extinguish Thirst; and those Meats that in least quantity do longest resist Hunger: But now of this, the more a Man drinks, the more he is athirst; the more he eats, the more he is hungry: It is a Dropsie, that swells him till he bursts, before he can be satisfied. And which is worse, in some so extravagant is this thirst, that it makes them dig the pits, and carefully draw the Water, and after all, won't suffer 'em to drink: In the midst of a River, they are dry with thirst; and on a heap of Corn, cry out of Famine: They have Goods, and dare not use them; Garments, but dare not put 'em on: And tho' they are possess'd of that in which they joy, they don't enjoy it: The sum of all which is, That of all which they have, they have nothing.

Let us then return unto that, That the attaining of all these deceiveable Goods, is nothing else but weariness of Body, and the possession for the most part weariness of Mind; which certainly is so much the greater Evil, as the Mind is more sensible than the Body.

But the Compliment of all their Misery is, when they come to lose them, either by shipwrack, Fire, or any other Accident, then they cry, weep, and torment themselves; like little Children, that have lost their Play-game, which yet is nothing worth. One cannot perswade them that mortal Men have any other Good in this World, but that which is mortal. They are in their own conceits not only spoiled, but utterly undone: And forasmuch as in these vain things they have fix'd all their hope, having lost them, they fall into Despair, out of which they are seldom recovered, many times laying violent hands upon themselves, and bringing their own lives to an unhappy period.

In short, The recompence that Covetousness yields those that have serv'd it all their Life, is like that of the Devil, who after a small time having gratified his Votaries, either leaves them to the Hangman, or himself breaks their Necks.

I will not here discourse of the Wickedness to which covetous men subject themselves to attain to these Goods, whereby their Conscience is fill'd with a perpetual Remorse, which never leaves them in quiet. It is enough that in this immoderate pursuit of Riches, which busieth and abuseth the greatest part of the World, the Body is macerated, the Mind debilitated, and the Soul is lost, without any Pleasure or Contentment.

Let us then come to *Ambition*, which by an over-eager aspiring to Honour, takes up the time and thoughts of the Greatest Persons: And what, Do we there think to find more *Content*? Alas! 'Tis rather less; and this, I am sure, I can witness to my cost: For as the one deceives us, by giving us for all our travel but a vile Excrement of the Earth; so the other repays us but with Smoak and Wind: The Rewards of this, being as vain; as those of that, were gross. In both we fall into a bottomless Pit; but into this, the fall is by so much the more dangerous, as at the first shew the Water is more clear and pleasant.

Of those Men that make their court to *Ambition*, some are great about Princes, others Commanders of Armies; both sorts according to their degree, you see saluted, reverenced, and adored of those that are under them: You see them apparelled in Purple, in Scarlet, and in Cloth of Gold; that at first sight one would think there is no *Content* to be found but amongst them. But alas!

men



men know not how heavy an ounce of ~~that~~ vain Honour weighs; they know not what those Reverences cost them; nor how dearly they pay for an Ell of those rich Stuffs: They are so over-rated, that he who knew them well, would never buy them at the Price. The one hath attain'd to this degree, after a long and painful Service, hazarding his Life upon every occasion, with loss oft-times of a Leg or an Arm; and that at the pleasure of a Prince that more regards a hundred Perches of Ground on his Neighbours Frontiers, than the Lives of a hundred thousand such as he; unfortunate to serve who loves him not; and foolish to think himself in honour with him, that makes so little reckoning to lose him for a thing of no worth.

Others there are that aspire to Greatness by flattering a Prince; which is a Life so base and servile, that they can never say their very Souls are their own, any longer than their Prince is pleas'd to let 'em; for they must always have their Hands and Tongues ready to do and say whatever he would have them; and yet they must be content to suffer a thousand Injuries, and receive a thousand disgraces: And as near as they seem about the Prince, they are nevertheless always like the Lions Keeper, who when by long patience, a thousand Feedings, and a thousand Clawings, he hath made a fierce Lion familiar, yet never gives him Meat, but with pulling back his hand, always in fear lest he should catch him; and if once in a year he bites him, he sets it so close, that he is paid for a long time after. Such generally is the end of the Favourites of Princes.

When a Prince after long Service hath rais'd a Man to the highest pitch of Honour, he sometimes makes it his Pastime to cast him down in an instant; and when he hath fill'd him with heaps of Wealth and Riches, he squeezes him afterward like a Sponge; loving none but himself, and thinking every one born but to serve and please him.

These blind Courtiers make themselves believe that they have Friends, and many that honour them; never considering that as they make only a shew to love and honour every body, so others do to them: Their Superiours disdain them, and never but with some kind of scorn so much as salute them. Their Inferiours salute them, because they have need of them, (I mean of their Fortune,

tune, their Food, their Apparell, not their Persons.) And for their Equals, between whom Friendship usually consists, they envy, accuse, and cross each other; being always troubled either at their own harm, or at anothers good. Now what greater torment is there to a Man than Envy? Which is indeed nothing but a *Hedrick Fever* of the Mind; by which they are utterly depriv'd of all Friendship, which was ever judg'd by the Wisest, the Sovereign Good amongst Men.

But to make this more evident, Let but Fortune turn her back, and every Man turns from them; let 'em be but disrob'd of their Triumphal Garment, and no body will know 'em any more. And then suppose the most infamous and vilest Miscreant to be cloathed in it, he shall by vertue of his Robe, inherit all the Honours of the other, and the same Respect shall be paid him; so that it is the Fortune which they carry that is honoured, and not themselves.

But you will say, At least so long as that Fortune endur'd, they were at Ease, and had *Content*; and he who has three or four years of Happy Time, has not been all his Life Unhappy. True, if it be to be at Ease, continually to fear to be cast down from that degree unto which they are raised; and daily covet with great Labour to climb higher. But those whom thou look'st upon to be so much at ease, because thou seest 'em but without, are within far otherwise; they are fair-built Prisons, but full within of deep Dungeons, Darknes, Serpents and Torments: Thou supposhest their Fortunes very large, but they think them very strait; thou thinkest them very high, but they think themselves very low. Now he is full as sick, who believes himself to be so, as he who indeed is so: Suppose them to be Kings, yet if they think themselves Slaves, they are no better; for we are only what Opinion makes us. You see them well followed and attended, and yet even those whom they have chose for their Guard, they distrust. Alone or in company, they are ever in fear: Alone, they look behind them; in company, they have an Eye on every side: They drink in Gold and Silver; but 'tis in those, and not in Earth or Glass, that Poyson is prepared: They have Beds soft and well made; yet when they lie down to sleep, their fears and cares do often keep them waking, and turning from side to side, so that their very Rest

is restless. And there's no other difference between them and a poor fetter'd Prisoner, but only that the Prisoners Fetters are of Iron, and the others are of Gold; the one is fetter'd by the Body, the other by the Mind; the Prisoner draws his Fetters after him, the Courtier weareth his upon him: The Prisoners Mind sometimes comforts the pain of his Body, and he sings in the midst of his Miseries; the Courtier is always troubled in Mind, wearying his Body, and can never give it rest. And as for the *Contentment* you imagine they have, you are therein more deceived: You esteem them Great, because they are rais'd High; but are therein as much mistaken, as they who should judge a Dwarf to be Tall, for being set on a Tower, or standing on the top of the Monument. You measure (like one unskill'd in Geometry) the Image with his Base, which you should measure by it self, if you would know its true height. You imagine them to be Great, but could you look into their Minds, you would see they are neither Great, (true Greatness consisting in the contempt of those vain Greatnesses unto which they are Slaves) nor seem unto themselves to be so; seeing they daily are aspiring higher, and yet never where they would be.

Some there are, that pretend to set bounds to their Ambition; and to say, If I could attain to such a degree, I should be contented, and sit down satisfied; but alas! when they have once attained it, they scarce allow themselves a breathing time, before they make advances towards something higher; and all he has attain'd he esteems as nothing, and still reputes himself low, because there is some one higher; instead of reputing himself high, because there are a million lower: And so high he climbs at last, that either his breath fails him by the way, or he slides from the top to the bottom.

But if he should get up, by all his toil and labour, unto the utmost height of his desires, he would but find himself as on the top of the *Alps*, not above the Clouds, but more obnoxious to the Winds and Storms; and so a fairer Mark for those Lightnings and Tempests which commonly take pleasure to Thunderbolt and dash to powder that proud height of theirs.

It may be herein you will agree with me, compell'd thereto by those many Examples that we find in the Histories of former Ages,  
and

and those more Modern ones that are still recent in most Mens Memories : But my own sad Experience is, to me, more convincing than a thousand Instances ; while aiming at a higher pitch of Honour, by a too forward Zeal for my Prince, I have only brought my self into a Prison ; where the greatest Preferment I can hope for, is to mount a Scaffold ; and instead of having my head circled with a Coronet, 'tis like to fall a Victim to my Enemies, by the hands of an Executioner.

But say you, Such at least whom Nature hath sent into the World with Crowns on their Heads, and Scepters in their Hands ; such as from their Birth are plac'd in that high Sphere, that they have nothing more to wish for ; such are exempt from all the fore-mention'd Evils, and therefore may call themselves happy : It may be indeed they may be less sensible of them, having been born, bred, and brought up amongst them : As one born near the down-falls of *Nilus*, becomes deaf to the sound of those Waters ; and he that is born and brought up in Prison, laments not the loss of Liberty ; nor does he wish for Day, that is brought up amongst the *Cimmerians* in perpetual Night. Yet even Persons of this high Quality, are far from being free ; for the Lightning often blasts a Flower of their Crowns, or breaks the Scepter in their hands ; sometimes their Crowns are made of Thorns, and the Scepter that they bear is but a Reed : And such Crowns and Scepters are so far from curing the Chagrin of the Mind, and from keeping off those Cares and Griefs that hover still about 'em, that on the contrary, it is the Crown that brings them, and the Scepter that attracts them. *O Crown*, said the Persian Monarch, *He that knew how heavy thou fittest on the Head, would not vouchsafe to take thee up, tho' he should meet thee in his way.* This Prince gave Law to the whole World, and each Mans Fortune, was what he pleas'd to make it ; and therefore to appearance could give to every Man Content ; and yet you see himself confessing, That in the whole World, which he held in his hand, there was nothing but Grief and Unhappiness.

And what better account can the rest give us, if they will speak impartially what they found ? We will not ask them who have concluded a miserable Life with a Dishonourable Death ; who have beheld their Kingdoms burst before them, and have in great mi-  
fery

very long over-liv'd their Greatness. Neither will we enquire of *Dionysius* the Tyrant of *Sicily*, who was more content with a handful of Twigs to whip the little Children of *Corinth* in a School, than with the Scepter wherewith he had beaten all *Sicily*: Nor will we ask of *Sylla*, who having robb'd the Commonwealth of *Rome*, which had her self before robb'd the whole World, never found means of rest in himself, but by robbing himself of his own Estate, with incredible hazzard of his Power and Authority. Nor (to come nearer home) will we enquire of *Charles* the Royal Martyr, the lustre of whose Crown did only serve to tempt his Enemies, not only to take it from his Head, but to take his Head off too; and whose Scepter was too weak to overcome the force of Armed Rebels. Nor will we ask of his two Exil'd Sons, the first of which endur'd Twelve years of Banishment ere he enjoy'd his Crown; and the last, in less than a *Quinque Neronem*, was forc'd to leave his Crown and Kingdoms, and fly for Refuge to a Neighbouring Monarch, whose Generous Goodness has ever since supported him; whose sad Misfortunes I the more regret, because they both include my own, and are their Source and Fountain. It is of none of these unhappy Princes that we will make Enquiry after Happiness: But let us ask the Opinion of the most Opulent and flourishing of Princes, even of the great King *Solomon*, a Man endew'd with singular Wisdom from Above, beyond the rest of Men; and whose immense Riches was so great, that Gold and Silver were as plentiful as the Stones in the Street; and the Sacred History tells us, There was such plenty of Gold, that Silver was nothing accounted of, in the days of *Solomon*; and as he wanted not Treasure, so neither did he want for largeness of heart to make use of it: And after he had try'd all the Felicities that the World could afford him, this is the account that he gives of it, *All is vanity and vexation of Spirit*.

If we ask of the Emperor *Augustus*, who peaceably possess'd the whole world, He will bewail his Life past, and among infinite Toils, wish for the Rest of the meanest of his Subjects; esteeming that a happy Day that would ease him of his insupportable Greatness, and suffer him to live quietly among the least.

If of *Tiberius* his Successor, he will tell us, *That he holds the Empire, as a Wolf by the Ears, and that (if he could do it without danger of be-*

ing bitten, he would gladly let it go; complaining on Fortune for lifting him so high, and then taking away the Ladder, that he could not get down.

If of *Dioclesian*, a Prince of great Wisdom and Vertue in the Opinion of the World; he will prefer his voluntary Banishment at *Solona*; before all the Roman Empire.

And lastly, If of the Emperour *Charles* the Fifth, esteemed the most happy that hath liv'd these many Ages, He will curse his Conquests, Victories and Triumphs; and not be ashamed to own, That he hath felt more Good in one day of his Monkish Solitude, than in all his Triumphant Life.

Now can we imagine those happy in this imaginary Greatness, who think themselves unhappy in it? And do profess that Happiness consists in being lesser and not greater. In a word, Whatever Happiness *Ambition* promiseth, it is nothing else, but suffering of much Evil, to get more. Men think by daily climbing higher, to pluck themselves out of this Evil; and yet the height whereunto they so painfully aspire, is the height of misery it self.

I speak not here of the wretchedness of them, who all their Lives have been holding out their Caps to Fortune for the Alms of Court-Favour, and can get nothing; nor of them who jostling one another for it, cast it into the hands of a third; nor of those who having it, and seeking to hold it faster, drop it through their Fingers, which often happens. Such by all Men are esteem'd unhappy; and are so indeed, because they judge themselves so.

Well, you will now say, The *Covetous* in all his Goods, hath no Good; the *Ambitious* at the best he can be, is but ill: But may there not be some, who supplying the place of Justice, or being near about a Prince, may without following such unbridled Passions, enjoy their Goods with Innocence and Pleasure, joyning Honour with Rest, and Contentment of Mind?

Perhaps in former Ages (when there remain'd among Men some sparks of Sincerity) it might in some sort be so; but being of that composition they now are, it is in a manner, impossible: For if you deal in Affairs of State, you shall either do well or ill; if ill, you have God for your Enemy, and your own Conscience for a perpetually tormenting Executioner: If well, you have Men for your Enemies, and of Men the Greatest; whose Envy and Malice will  
spy



spy you out, and whose Cruelty and Tyranny will evermore threaten you. Please the People, you please a Beast; and pleasing such, ought to be displeasing to your self. Please your self, you displease God: please Him, you incur a thousand dangers in the World, with the purchase of a thousand displeasures. The sum of all therefore is this, There are none contented with their present stations; for if you could hear the talk of the wisest and least discontented of Men, whether they speak advisedly, or their words pass them by force of truth, One would gladly change Garments with his Tenant: Another preacheth how goodly an estate it is to have nothing: A third, complaining that his brains are broken with the noise of Court or Palace, hath no other thought, but as soon as he can to retire himself thence. So that you shall not see any but is displeased with his own calling, and envieth that of another: And yet ready to recoil, if a Man should take him at his word. None but is weary of the Inconveniencies whereunto his Age is subject, and yet wishes not to be elder, to free himself of them, tho' otherwise he keeps off old Age as much as in him lyeth.

What must we then do in so great a contrariety and confusion of minds? Must we, to find true Contentment, fly the society of Men, hide us in Forrests among wild Beasts, and sequester our selves from all conversation, to preserve our selves from the evil of the World? Could we in so doing live at rest, it were something; But alas! Men cannot take herein what part they would; and even they which do, find not there all the Rest they sought for.

But where can he fly, that carries his Enemy in his Bosom? And since, as the wise Man says, The World is in our Hearts, hardly can we find a place in this World, where the World will not find us. And as some make profession to fly the World, who thereby seek nothing but the praise of the World; and as some hide themselves from Men, to no other end but that Men should seek them; so the World often harbors in disguised Attire, among them that fly the World. It is not therefore Solitude and Retirement can give us Contentment, but only the subduing of our unruly Lusts and Passions.

Now as touching that Contentment that may be found in Solitude by wise Men, in the Exercise of Reading divers Books, of both Divine and Profane Authors, in order to the acquiring of Know-

ledge and Learning, it is indeed a very commendable thing; but if we will take *Solomon's* Judgment in the Case, it is all but vanity and vexation of Spirit: For some are ever learning to correct their Speech, and never think of correcting their Life. Others by Logical Discourses of the Art of Reason, dispute many times so long, till they lose thereby their Natural Reason. One learns by Arithmetick to divide into the smallest Fractions, and yet hath not skill to part one Shilling with his Brother. Another by Geometry can measure Fields, and Towns, and Countries: But cannot measure himself. The Musitian can accord his Voices, and Sounds, and Times together; Having nothing in his Heart but Discords; nor one Passion in his Soul, but what is out of tune. The Astrologer looks up to the Stars, and falls in the next Ditch: Fore-knows the future, and is careless for the present; hath often his Eye on the Heavens, tho' his Heart be buried in the Earth. The Philosopher discourseth of the nature of all other things; and yet knows not himself. The Historian can tell of the Wars of *Thebes* and of *Troy*; but is ignorant of what is done in his own House. The Lawyer will make Laws for all the World, and yet observe none himself. The Physitian Cures others, but languishes himself under his own Malady: He can find the least alteration in his Pulse, but takes no notice of the burning Feaver of his Mind. Lastly, the Divine will spend the greatest part of his time in disputing of Faith, and yet cares not to hear of Charity: Will talk of God, but has no regard to succour Men. These knowledges bring on the Mind an endless labour, but no contentment; for the more he knows, the more he desires to know.

They pacifie not the Debates a Man feels in himself, they cure not the diseases of his Mind. They make him learned, but they make him not good; cunning, but not wise. The more a Man knows, the more he knows that he knows not; the fuller the Mind is, the emptier it finds it self: Forasmuch as whatsoever a Man can know of any Science in this world, is but the least part of what he is ignorant of: All his knowledge consisting in knowing his ignorance, all his perfection in seeing his imperfections, which who best knows and notes, is in truth among Men the most wise and perfect. In short we must conclude with *Solomon*, that the beginning and end of Wisdom is the fear of God; yet this Wisdom nevertheless

nevertheless is taken by the World for meer Folly, and persecuted by the World as a deadly Enemy; and therefore, as he that fears God, ought to fear no evil, for that all his evils are converted to his good: So neither ought he to hope for good in the World, having there the Devil his professed Enemy, whom the Scripture termeth Prince of this World.

But with what exercise soever we pass the time, old Age unawares comes upon us, which never failes to find us out. Every Man makes account in that Age to repose himself without further care, and to keep himself at ease in health. But on the contrary, in this age, there is nothing but an after-tast of all the foregoing evils; and most commonly a plentiful harvest of all such Vices as in the whole course of their Life, hath held and possessed them. There you have the Imbecility and Weakness of Infancy, and (which is worse) many times accompanied with authority: There you are paid for the excess and riot of your Youth, with Gouts, Palsies, and such like Diseases, which take from you Limb after Limb, with pain and torment. There you are recompenc'd for the anxieties of Mind, the watchings and cares of Manhood, with loss of Sight, loss of Hearing, and all the Sences one after another, except only the sense of Pain. Not one part in us but Death takes hold of, to be assured of us, as of bad pay-masters, which seldom keep days of payment: There is nothing in us which is not visible declining, except our Vices; and they not only live, but in despite of Nature, grow young again. The Covetous Man hath one Foot in his Grave, and is yet burying his Money, as if he had hopes to find it again another day. The Ambitious in his Will provides for a pompous Funeral, making his vice to triumph even after his Death. The Riotous no longer able to dance on his Feet, danceth with his Shoulders, all Vices having left him, and he not able to leave them. The Child wishes for Youth; and this Man laments it. The Young Man lives in hope of the future, and this feels the evil present, laments the false pleasures past, and sees for the time to come nothing to hope for. And is more foolish than the Child, in bewailing the time he can't recall, and remembers not the evil that he suffer'd in it; and more wretched than the Young Man, in that after a vicious life, and not being able any longer to live, he must miserably die, seeing nothing round about him but matter of despair.

As

As for him that from his Youth hath undertaken to combat against the flesh and the World, who hath used to mortifie himself, and leave the World whilst he continues in it; who besides those ordinary Evils, finds himself vexed with this great and incurable Disease of Old Age; and yet feels his Flesh, how weak soever, often stronger than his Spirit; what satisfaction can he take, but only in this, that he sees his Death is at hand; that his Warfare is accomplished, and that he is ready to depart by Death out of this loathsome Prison, wherein he has been all along rack'd and tormented?

I forbear to mention the almost infinite Evils wherewith Men in all Ages are afflicted, as loss of Friends and Parents, Banishments, Exiles, Disgraces, and other Accidents, common and ordinary in the World; one complaining of losing his Children, another of having them; one lamenting for his Wives Death, another for her Life; one finding fault that he is too high in Court, and others more often that they are not high enough. The World is so full of Evils, that it would require a World of Time to write 'em in. And if the most happy Man in the World should set his Felicities and Infelicities against each other, he would see cause enough to judge himself unhappy: And yet perhaps another Man might judge him happy, who yet if he had been but three days in his place, would give it over to him that should come next. And he that shall consider, in all the Goods that ever he hath had, the Evils he hath suffered to get them, and having got them, to retain and keep them, (I speak of Pleasures that may be kept, and not of those that wither in a moment) he will soon judge that keeping it self of the greatest Felicity in this World, is full of Unhappiness and Infelicity.

We may well conclude then, That Childhood is but a foolish Simplicity; Youth, a vain Heat; Manhood, a painful Carefulness; and Old Age, an uneasy Languishing: That our Plays are but Tears, our Pleasures, Fevers of the Mind; our Goods, Racks and Torments; our Honours, gilded Vanities; our Rest, Inquietude: That passing from Age to Age, is but passing from Evil to Evil, and from the less unto the greater; and that always it is but one Wave driving on another, until we be arrived at the Haven of Death.

In short, Life is but a wishing for the future, and a bewailing of what's past; a loathing of what we have tasted, and a longing for what is yet to taste; a vain memory of the state past, and a doubtful expectation of the state to come: And to conclude, In all our Life there is nothing certain, but the Certainty and Uncertainty of Death.

And now we are come to the end of all the Living, even to the House of Death: Behold this King of Terrors, O my Soul, and see whether or no he be so terrible as he is represented: It is high time, methinks, for Death and I to be acquainted, since I expect in a very few days (not to say hours) to be taken into his Arms, and conducted by him to the bright Mansions of Eternity.

Let us now consider then whether Death be such as we are generally made to believe; and whether we ought to fly from him as we do: We are afraid of Death like little Children of a Vizzard, or of the Images of *Hecate*: We have a horror for Death, because we conceive him not such as he is, but ugly, terrible, and hideous; such as the Painters please to represent him: We fly before him because prepossess'd with such vain Imaginations, and care not to inform our selves better. But if we dare stand and look Death in the face, we shall find him quite another thing than he is represented to us, and altogether of a more amiable Countenance than our miserable Life. Death makes an end of this Life, and this Life is nothing but a perpetual Scene of Misery and Trouble; Death then is the period of our Miseries, and safe Conduct into that desired Haven, where we shall ride in safety from all Winds and Storms: And shall we be afraid of that which delivers us from all our fears, and brings us safe into the Port of Happiness?

But you will say, It is a Pain to dye: Admit it be, and so there's pain in curing of a Wound: Such is the World, that one Evil can't be cur'd but by another; to heal a Contusion, must be made an Incision.

You will say, There is difficulty in the passage: But if this be an Objection, the Mariner must always keep at Sea, and not come into Port, because there is no Harbour whose Entrance is not strait and difficult. There is nothing of Value or Worth to be had in this World without the Coyn of Labour and Pain. The Entrance may indeed be hard, but then it is our selves that make it

it so, by carrying thither self-tormenting Spirits, anxious Minds, accusing Consciences, and fearful Expectations of meeting with the just Reward of a Debauch'd and Vicious Life : But let us carry with us Calmness and Serenity of Mind, with the comfortable remembrance of a Vertuous and well-spent Life, and the lively hope and expectation of approaching Happinefs, and we shall find no Danger nor Difficulty at all.

But what are the pains that Death brings us ? And why should Death be charg'd with those pains we feel when we come to dye ? We accuse Death of all the Evils we suffer in ending our Lives, and consider not how many more grievous and cruciating Pains and Sickneses we have suffered in this Life, in which we have even call'd upon Death to deliver us,; and yet all the Pains of our Life, to our last moment, we impute to Death, whereas it ought to be ascrib'd to Life ; for 'tis but reasonable to believe that a Life begun and continued in all sorts of pain, must of necessity end so : And therefore 'tis only the remainder of our Life that pains us, and not Death ; the end of our Navigation that troubles us, and not the Haven that we are to enter, which is nothing else but a Safe-guard against all Winds. We complain of Death, when we should complain of Life, just as if one that had been long sick, and beginning to be well, should accuse his Health of his last Pains, and not the Relicks of his Disease.

Tell me then, what is it else to be dead, but to be no more living in the World ? And is it any pain not to be in the World ? Did we then feel pain when as yet we were not ? Have we ever more resemblance of Death, than when we are asleep ? Or ever more rest, than at that time ? Now if this be no pain, why accuse we Death of the Pains our Life gives us at our departure ? Unless also we will fondly accuse the Time wherein we were not, of the pains we felt at our Birth. If our coming in be with Tears, what wonder is it that our going out be such ? If the beginning of our being, be the beginning of our pain, no marvel that such is the ending. But if our not being in times past, hath been without pain, and all our being here full of pain ; whom ought we in reason to accuse of our last pains, the not-being to come, or the remnant of the present being ?

We generally think we dye not until we fetch our last gasp, but  
if



if we mind it well, we shall find that we dye every day, every hour, every moment. We apprehend Death as a thing unusual to us, and yet have nothing so common in us: Our Living is but a continual Dying; and look how much we live, so much we dye; how much we increase, our Life decreases: We cannot enter a step into Life, but we are upon the borders of Death. Who has lived a third part of his years, is a third part dead; who half his years, is already half dead. Of our Life, all the time past is dead, the present lives and dies at once, and the future likewise shall dye.

The past time of our Lives is no more, the future is not yet, the present is, and no more is.

Briefly, This whole Life is but a Death: It is as a Candle lighted in our Bodies: In one the Wind makes it melt away, in another it blows it quite out, many times, ere it be half burned; in others it endures to the end: Howsoever it be, look how much the Candle shines, so much it burns; for its shining is its burning: Its Light is but a vanishing Smoak; and its last Fire but its last Wick, and its last drop of moisture.

So is it in the Life of Man; Life and Death in Man, is all one: If we call the last breath by the name of Death, so we must all the rest; all proceeding from one place, and all in the same manner.

One only difference there is between this Life, and that which we call Death; That during the one, we are always dying; but after the other, we shall always live.

In short, As he that thinketh Death simply to be the End of Man, ought not to fear it; inasmuch as he who desires to live long, desires to dye longer; and so he who fears to dye quickly, does (to speak properly) fear least he may not dye longer.

But to us who profess the Christian Religion, and are brought up in a more holy School, Death is a far other thing; neither do we need (as heretofore the Pagans did) Consolations against Death: For Death it self ought to be to us a Consolation against other Afflictions: So that we must not only strengthen our selves (as they did) not to fear it; but we ought also to hope it: For unto us it is not only a departing from Pain and Evil, but an Access unto all Good; not the end of Life, but the end of Death,

and Pain, and Sorrow ; and the beginning of a Life that shall never have an end.

*Better (saith Solomon) is the Day of Death, than the Day of Birth :* But for what Reason ? Why because it is not to us a *Last Day*, but the Dawning of an *Everlasting Day*.

No more shall we have in that glorious Light either Sorrow for the past, or Expectation for the future ; for all shall be there present to us, and that Present shall be present for ever. No more shall we spend our strength in seeking after vain and painful Pleasures ; for there we shall be fill'd with true and substantial Delights. No more shall we weary our selves in heaping together these shining Exhalations of the Earth ; for the inexpressible Glory of Heaven shall be ours : And this Mass of Earth, which ever draws us towards the Earth, shall be then buried in it, and consumed with it.

No more shall we then be Votaries to that gaudy Idol, Honour ; nor put our Wits upon the Rack, that so we may be deck'd with finer Feathers than our Neighbours : Ambition will have there no place ; for we shall there be rais'd to that Excelling Glory, and be possess'd of all those Heights of Greatness, that we shall look with scorn and with contempt upon an Earthly Diadem ; and smile at all the Follies of poor groveling Mortals, who fight and quarrel with each other for a small spot of Earth, like Children for an Apple.

And (which is better still) no more shall we have Combats in our selves ; Our sinful Flesh (that here was our worst Enemy) shall cease from troubling there ; and our renewed Spirits shall be fill'd with Life and Vigour : Our Passion shall be buried, and our Reason be restor'd to perfect Liberty : The Soul (deliver'd out of this foul and filthy Prison, where by its long continuing it is grown into a habit of Crookedness) shall again draw its own breath, recognize its Ancient Dwelling, and again remember its former Glory and Dignity.

This Flesh which thou feelest, this Body which thou toucest, is not Man : Man is a Spark of the Divinity shot down from Heaven : Heaven is his Countrey, and his Native Air : That he is in this Body, is but by way of Exile and Confinement.

Man indeed is Soul and Spirit, and is of a Divine and Heavenly Qua-

Quality, wherein there's nothing gross, nothing material. This Body (such as now it is) is but the Bark and Shell of the Soul; which must necessarily be broke, before we can be hatch'd, before we can live and see the Light.

We have, it seems, some Life, and some Sence in us; but are so very crooked and contracted, that we cannot so much as stretch out our Wings, much less take our flight towards Heaven, until we be disburthen'd and separated from this Lump of Earth: We look, but 'tis through false Spectacles: We have Eyes, but they are over-grown with Pearls: We think we see, but 'tis but in a Dream, wherein all that we see is nothing but a vain Illusion: All that we seem to have, and all that we seem to know, is but Deceit and Vanity.

Death only can awake us from our Dream, and restore us to true Life and Light; and yet we think (so blockish are we) that he comes to rob us of them.

We profess our selves Christians, and that we believe after this mortal Life a Life of Immortality; That Death is nothing but a separation of the Soul and Body; and that the Soul returns to its former happy abode, there to joy in and enjoy the Fountain of all Bliss; and that at the last day it shall re-assume its Body, which shall no more be subject to Corruption. With these goodly Discourses we fill our Books; and in the mean while, when it comes to the point, and that we are ready to enter in at this Portcullis of Seraphical Glory, the very Name of Death, as of some dreadful *Gorgon*, makes us quake and tremble.

If we believe as we speak, pray what is it that we fear? To be happy? To be perfectly at ease? To enjoy more Content in one moment, than ever was enjoy'd even by *Methuselah* himself, in all his Nine hundred sixty nine years, which was the longest mortal Life I ever read of? If this be nothing that we fear, then we must of necessity confess, that we believe it but in part; that all that we have said, are only words; that all our Discourses, as of those hardy Trencher Knights, are nothing but Vaunting and Vanity.

Some there are that will confidently tell you, I know very well that I shall pass out of this Life into a better; I make no doubt of that; only I fear the mid-way step.

Weak Hearted Creatures! They will kill themselves to get their miserable living: They willingly suffer almost infinite pains, and infinite wounds at another Mans pleasure; and fearless go throw infinite deaths without dying, and all this for things of nought, for things that perish, and that oft times causes them to perish with them. But when they have but one step to make to be at Rest, and that not for a day, but for ever: And not barely Rest, but a Rest of that exalted Nature, that Mans natural Mind can never comprehend: They tremble, their Hearts fail them, they are afraid; and yet it is nothing but fear that hurts them. Let them never tell me, they apprehend the pain: It is but an abuse on purpose to conceal the little Faith they have. No, no, they would rather languish of the Gout, the Sciatica, or any Disease whatsoever, than dye one sweet Death with the least pain possible: Rather piningly dye Limb after Limb, out-living as it were, all their Sences, Motions, and Actions, than speedily Dye, tho' immediatly to Live for ever. Let them tell me no more that they would in this World learn to Live: For every one is thereunto sufficiently instructed in himself, and not one but is cunning in the Trade. Nay rather they should learn in this World to Dye, and that they may once Dye well, to Dye daily in themselves; so prepared, as if the end of every days Work, were the end of our Life.

Now contrariwise there is nothing to their Ears more offensive, than to hear of Death. Senseless People! We abandon our Life to the ordinary hazzards of War, for Six Pence a Day, and are foremost in Assaults, for a little Booty; go into Places, whence there is no hope of returning, with danger many times both of Bodies and Souls. But to free us from all Hazzards, to win the precious Prize of things Inestimable, to enter into Eternal Life, we Faint in the passage of one Pace, wherein is no Difficulty, but in Opinion: Yea we so Faint, that were it not of necessity that we must pass, and that Gods ordination that all must dye, compells us, hardly should we find in all the World one, how unhappy or wretched soever, that would ever shoot that Gulph. Another will say, had I liv'd till Fifty or Sixty Years, I should have been Contented; I should not have car'd to live longer: But to dye so Young, is that which troubles me: I would willingly have known the

the World before I had left it. Simple Soul! In this World there is neither Young nor Old. The longest Age in comparison of all that is past, or all that is to come, is nothing: And when thou hast liv'd to the Age thou now desirest, all that is past will be nothing: Thou wilt still gape for that which is to come. The past will yield thee but Sorrow, the future but Expectation, the present no Contentment. And thou wilt be as unwilling to Dye then, as ever thou was't. Thou fliest thy Creditor from Mouth to Mouth, and Time to Time, as unwilling to pay the last day, as the first: Thou seekest but to be acquitted. Thou hast tasted all which the World esteemeth Pleasures: Not one of them is new unto thee. By drinking oftener, thou shalt be never a whit the more satisfied: For the Body thou carrest, like the Pail of *Danaus* Daughter, which was bored full of holes, will never be full. Thou mayst sooner wear it out, than weary thy self with using, or rather abusing it. Thou desirest long Life, to cast it away, to spend it on worthless Delights, to mispend it on Vanities. Thou art Covetous in desiring, and Prodigal in spending. Say not thou findest fault with the Court, or the Palace: But that thou desirest longer to serve the Common-Wealth, to serve thy Country, to serve God. He that set thee on Work knows until what Day, and what Hour, thou shouldest be at it: He well knows how to direct his Work. Should he leave thee there longer, perhaps thou wouldest spoil all. But if he will pay thee liberally for thy Labour, as much for half a days Work, as for a whole: As much for having wrought till noon, as for having born all the heat of the day: Oughtest thou not so much the more to Thank and Praise him? But if thou examin thine own Conscience, thou lamentest not the cause of the Widow, and the Orphan, which thou hast left depending in judgment: Not the Duty of a Son, of a Father, or of a Friend, which thou pretendest thou wouldest perform: Not the Ambassage for the Common-Wealth, which thou wert ever ready to undertake: Not the Service thou desirest to do unto God, who knows much better how to serve himself of thee, than thou of thy self. It is thy Houses and Gardens thou lamentest, thy imperfect Plots and purposes, and thy Imperfect Life; which yet no Days, nor Years, nor Ages can make Perfect, altho' thy self might'st do it in a moment; could'st thou but think in earnest, that where, or when it ends, it matters not, provided that it ends but well.

Now

Now the only way to end this Life well, is to end it willingly : devoting our selves with an intire Resignation to the will of GOD, and not suffering our selves to be constrain'd, and drawn by the force of unavoidable Destiny,

And then to end this Life willingly, We must hope for Death, not fear it.

To hope for Death, we must certainly look, after this Life, for a better.

To look for a better Life, we must fear GOD : And he that truly fears GOD, has nothing else he ought to fear in this World, and has reason to hope for all things in the World to come.

To one well resolved in these Points, Death must needs be sweet and agreeable : Knowing that through it he is to enter into the fulness of Joy.

The Bitterness we may find by the straitness of the Passage, will be allay'd by the Sweetness we shall find when we are enter'd in : Our suffering of Ill, shall be swallow'd up in the enjoyment of Good : And the Sting of Death it self (which is nothing but Fear) shall be dead.

Nay. I will say more, He shall not only triumph over all those Evils supposed to be in Death, but he shall also scorn all those Evils Men fear to meet with in this Life, and look upon 'em as unconcern'd.

For what can he fear, whose Death is his hope ? If you think to banish him his Country, he knows he has a Country from whence you cannot banish him ; and that all these Countries are but Inns, from which he must part in a little time. If to put him in a Prison, he can have none more strait than his own Body : nor none more filthy or dark, or more repleat of Racks and Torments : Or if you think to kill him, you only then compleat his hopes, for Death's what he desires. And for the manner of it, Be it by Fire, by Sword, by Halter, or by Ax ; within three years, within three days, within three hours, it is all one to him ; he matters not the time, nor minds the way, by which he passes from this miserable Life : For his Work is ended, his Affairs dispatch'd ; and by the self-same way that he goes out, he hopes to enter into a most happy and everlasting Life. Men can but threaten with Death, and Death is all he promiseth himself : The worst that they do, is but  
to



to make him dye, and Death is the best thing (in his account) that he can hope for.

The Threatnings of a Tyrant, to him are Promises; the Swords of his greatest Enemies against him, he reckons drawn in his favour; forasmuch as he knows, That threatening him Death, they threaten him Life; and the most Mortal Wounds can make him but Immortal.

The sum of all is, He that fears *GOD*, fears not *Death*; and he that fears not *Death*, fears not the worst of this Life.

By this reckoning (perhaps some Men may say) *Death* is a thing to be wished for: And to pass from so much Evil, to so much Good, a Man would be ready to cast away his Life, and make away himself.

In answer to this, we may take notice, First, That tho' the Spirit aspires towards Heaven, the Body draws towards the Earth, and the Soul is too often drawn by the Body. But in the second place; We must indeed seek to mortifie our Flesh in us, and to cast the World out of us; but to cast our selves out of this World, is in no case lawful.

The Christian ought willingly to depart out of this Life, but not cowardly to run away. His Work is to fight against the World, and cannot leave his post, without Reproach and Infamy. But if his Great Captain be pleas'd to call him, let him willingly obey: For he is not born for himself, but for *GOD*, of whom he holds his Life at farm, as Tenant at will, to yield him the profits. It is in the Landlord to take it from him, not in him to surrender it, when a conceit takes him.

Diest thou young? Praise *GOD*; as the Mariner that hath a good Wind, soon to bring him to the Port.

Diest thou old? Praise *GOD* likewise: For if thou hast had less Wind, it may be thou hast also had less Waves.

But think not at thy pleasure to go faster or slower, for the Wind is not in thy Power; and instead of taking the shortest way to the Haven, thou may'st suffer shipwrack.

Let us then neither fly from *Death*, when we are call'd to dye, whether it be in a more natural way, as by Old Age, or Sicknefs; or by a more violent way, as by the Sword in Battel, or by the hand of an Executioner; Nor fly to it, not being call'd: Which both

both argues the greatest Baseness and Pusillanimity of Spirit, and will also bring the guilt of our own Blood upon our own Heads : But let us meet *Death*, whenever or however it comes, with that Magnanimity and Greatness of Mind, that becomes both a Man and a Christian.

And now having beguil'd my Solitary Hours in Contemplating the Miseries of Life, and Happiness of *Death*, to me so much the more necessary, by how much it is nearer approaching ; I will conclude with a Valediction to the World, and all its vain Delights, written by a very Great Man, and Prime Minister of State, in the Reign of *Charles the First*, whilst under my unhappy Circumstances, and but a little before his Execution.

GO, Empty Joys, with all your Noise,  
 And leave me here alone,  
 In sad sweet Silence to bemoan  
 Your vain and fond Delight,  
 Whose Dangers none can see aright,  
 Whilst too much Sunshine blinds his sight :  
 Go and ensnare with your false Ware,  
 Some other easie Wight,  
 And cheat him with your flattering Light :  
 Rain on his head a Show'r, of Honour, Greatness, Wealth and  
 Then snatch it from him in an Hour : (Pow'r,  
 Fill his big Mind with the vain Wind of flattering Applause,  
 Let him not fear all Curbing Laws,  
 Nor King nor People's Frown ;  
 But dream of something like a Crown,  
 And Climbing tow'rs it, Tumble down.

A  
TRUE COPY  
OF THE

P A P E R

Delivered to the Sheriffs upon the  
Scaffold at *Tower-Hill*, on *Thursday, January*  
the 28th 1696.

By Sir *JOHN FENWICK*, Baronet.

Speaking nor Writing was never my Talent; I shall therefore give a very Short but Faithful Account, first, of my Religion; and next, what I suffer most innocently for, to avoid the Calumnies I may reasonably expect my Enemies will cast upon me when dead, since they have most falsely and maliciously aspers'd me whilst under my Misfortunes.

As for my Religion, I was brought up in the Church of *England*, as it is establish'd by Law, and have ever profess'd it; tho' I confess I have been an unworthy Member of it, in not living up to the strict and excellent Rules thereof, for which I take Shame to my self, and humbly ask forgiveness of G O D. I come now to dye in that Communion, trusting, as an humble and hearty Penitent, to be receiv'd by the Mercy of God, through the Merits of Jesus Christ my Saviour.

E

My

My Religion taught me my *Loyalty*, which, I bless God, is untainted: And I have ever endeavour'd, in the station wherein I have been placed, to the utmost of my power, to support the Crown of *England* in the True and Lineal Course of Descent, without interruption.

As for what I am now to dye; I call God to witness, I went not to that Meeting in *Leadenhall-street* with any such intention, as to invite King *James* by Force to invade this Nation; nor was I my self provided with either Horse or Arms, or engag'd for any number of Men, or gave particular Consent for any such Invasion, as is most falsely Sworn against me.

I do also declare, in the Presence of God, That I knew nothing of King *James's* coming to *Calais*, nor of any Invasion intended from thence, till it was publickly known: And the only Notion I had that something might be attempted, was from the *Thoulon* Fleet coming to *Brest*.

I also call God to witness, that I receiv'd the knowledge of what is contain'd in those Papers that I gave to a great Man that came to me in the *Tower*, both from Letters and Messages that came from *France*; and he told me, when I read them to him, That the Prince of *Orange* had been acquainted with most of those things before.

I might have expected Mercy from that Prince, because I was instrumental in saving his Life: For when about *April 1695*, an Attempt form'd against him came to my knowledge, I did, partly by Dissuasions, and partly by Delays, prevent that Design; which, I suppose, was the reason that the last Villanous Project was conceal'd from me.

If there be any Persons whom I have injur'd in Word or Deed, I heartily pray their Pardon, and beg of God to  
pardon

pardon those who have injur'd me, particularly those who with great Zeal have fought my Life, and brought the Guilt of my innocent Blood upon this Nation, no Treason being prov'd upon me.

I return my most hearty Thanks to those noble and worthy Persons who gave me their Assistance, by opposing this Bill of Attainder, without which it had been impossible I could have fal'n under the Sentence of *Death*: God bless them and their Posterity, tho' I am fully satisfied they pleaded their own Cause, while they defended mine.

I pray God to bless my true and lawful Sovereign King *James*, the Queen, and the Prince of *Wales*, and restore him and his Posterity to this Throne again, for the Peace and Prosperity of this Nation, which is impossible to prosper, till the Government is settled upon a right Foot.

*And now, O GOD, I do with all humble Devotion commend my Soul into thy Hands, the great Maker and Preserver of Men, and Lover of Souls, beseeching thee, that it may be always dear and precious in thy sight, through the Merits of my Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.*

J. FENWICKE.

*Supposed to have been written by Dr. White*

F I N I S.